

Senate Resolution

No. 18

Introduced by ~~Senators Senator Leno, Corbett, Correa, De León, Galgiani, Hancock, Hill, Jackson, Lara, Lieu, Liu, Roth, Steinberg, and Wolk~~

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August 12, 2013

Senate Resolution No. 18—Relative to the government of Russia.

1 WHEREAS, The government of Russia has recently undertaken
2 an aggressive course of action on both the local and national level
3 to pass laws targeting the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
4 (LGBT) community; and

5 WHEREAS, The government of Russia has enacted a law
6 banning the adoption of Russian-born children by LGBT couples
7 and also by any couple or single parent living in a country where
8 marriage equality exists in any form; and

9 WHEREAS, The government of Russia has enacted a law
10 banning “propaganda of nontraditional sexual relations” that
11 penalizes LGBT-affirming and positive messages or actions,
12 including, but not limited to, messages on the Internet, and violates
13 the fundamental human rights of freedom of speech, assembly,
14 expression, and equality, all under the guise of protecting children;
15 and

16 WHEREAS, ~~The Russian Federation~~ *Russia* is the host of the
17 XXII Olympic Winter Games; and

18 WHEREAS, The government of Russia has enacted a vaguely
19 worded law allowing police officers to arrest tourists and foreign

1 nationals who violate the new “gay propaganda” law and detain
2 them for up to 15 days and expel them from Russia; and

3 WHEREAS, Representatives of the Russian government have
4 indicated they intend to enforce the new law against visitors and
5 athletes during the XXII Olympic Winter Games; and

6 *WHEREAS, Representatives of the International Olympic*
7 *Committee, rather than condemning the new laws, have indicated*
8 *their view that statements in support of LGBT people and LGBT*
9 *rights would violate Rule 50 of the Olympic Charter, which*
10 *prohibits demonstrations or political, religious, or racial*
11 *propaganda; and*

12 *WHEREAS, Other international events are scheduled to occur*
13 *in Russia this year, including the Miss Universe Pageant in*
14 *Moscow on November 9, 2013, which is seen by billions of people*
15 *across the globe; and*

16 WHEREAS, These laws have already resulted in a significant
17 increase in homophobia and targeted violence against LGBT people
18 and caused millions of Russians to live in fear that their
19 government will target them or remove their children from their
20 homes simply because of who they are; and

21 WHEREAS, History repeatedly instructs us that despotic rulers
22 who scapegoat classes of their own citizens and then legislate their
23 status as outlaws often move on to initiate genocide against those
24 same people, especially if the rest of the world remains silent; and

25 *WHEREAS, President Barack Obama has publicly stated that*
26 *he is offended by the anti-LGBT laws; and*

27 WHEREAS, Hillary Clinton, as the 67th United States Secretary
28 of State, stated in a December 2011 Human Rights Day address
29 to the United Nations, “Gay rights are human rights, and human
30 rights are gay rights”; and

31 WHEREAS, Equity shareholders in publicly traded companies
32 can be instrumental in encouraging responsible corporate
33 citizenship, and the California Public Employees’ Retirement
34 System and the California State Teachers’ Retirement System have
35 joined 1,200 other institutional investors from 50 countries who
36 manage more than \$34 trillion in assets to develop and become a
37 signatory to the Principles for Responsible Investment; and

38 WHEREAS, Californians expect companies with equity
39 securities held in a public employee retirement fund’s portfolio to

1 be conducted with integrity and a view toward supporting and
2 protecting internationally proclaimed human rights; and

3 WHEREAS, California's history of leadership in socially
4 responsible public investing serves as a model followed by other
5 governments and includes divesting in shares of tobacco and gun
6 companies and banning investments in countries that violate
7 ethical, labor, and human rights standards, such as South Africa,
8 Iran, and Sudan; now, therefore, be it

9 *Resolved by the Senate of the State of California, That the Senate*
10 *condemns the Russian government's attacks on the LGBT*
11 *community and laws targeting LGBT people and their supporters,*
12 *including tourists, athletes, and other participants in the XXII*
13 *Olympic Winter Games; and be it further*

14 *Resolved, That the Senate deplores and condemns all laws and*
15 *acts of violence, in both word and in action, that use the*
16 *government as an instrument of discrimination, persecution, and*
17 *legislation against the LGBT community and its supporters; and*
18 *be it further*

19 *Resolved, That the Senate calls upon the President, the United*
20 *States Congress, and the United States Department of State to*
21 *increase efforts to encourage the decriminalization of*
22 *homosexuality in every country and to use all means possible to*
23 *increase the number of countries supporting decriminalization,*
24 *including, but not limited to, the United Nations, trade and*
25 *diplomatic relationships, and the implementation of international*
26 *treaties and declarations on human rights; and be it further*

27 *Resolved, That the Senate urges the International Olympic*
28 *Committee to withdraw their statements expressing that support*
29 *for LGBT people and their rights is a violation of Rule 50 and to*
30 *seek written agreement from the Russian government that the new*
31 *"gay propaganda" law will not affect those attending, participating,*
32 *or competing in the XXII Olympic Winter Games; and be it further*

33 *Resolved, That the Senate urges NBCUniversal, as broadcaster*
34 *of the XXII Olympic Winter Games in the United States, to*
35 *increase awareness of Russia's homophobic laws and the threat*
36 *they pose to participating athletes and visitors by discussing them*
37 *on air at every opportunity, including during the opening and*
38 *closing ceremonies when millions of Americans will be watching;*
39 *and be it further*

1 RESOLVED, *That the Senate urges other organizations holding*
2 *large internationally televised events in Russia, including the Miss*
3 *Universe Organization and its owner Donald Trump, to move their*
4 *events to countries without such virulently antigay laws; and be*
5 *it further*

6 *Resolved*, That the Senate strongly encourages the California
7 Public Employees' Retirement System and the California State
8 Teachers' Retirement System, whenever feasible and consistent
9 with their fiduciary responsibilities, to cease making direct
10 investments in Russia and to encourage companies in which
11 employee retirement funds are invested and that are doing business
12 in Russia not to take actions that promote or otherwise enable
13 human rights violations in Russia; and be it further

14 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of
15 this resolution to the author for appropriate distribution.